

Transport Committee – 25 February 2015

Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Question and Answer Session with the Commissioner of Transport, Sir Peter Hendy CBE

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Welcome to all our visitors in the gallery this morning. We know this shows strength of feeling about this first half of our meeting, which is on taxis and private hire. Welcome, Sir Peter.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Morning.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Are you settled in yet or do you need a couple more minutes?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): More or less. You will find I have a bad cough. If I have to stop, it is because I cannot continue.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Plenty of water and coffee by the looks of it. Hopefully that will get you through.

Can I just start off by thanking a huge number of people, including many in the audience, who contributed to our report, *Future Proof*, on taxi and private hire services in London? We felt it was very timely to do a review of this area. It is probably one of the major areas of transport that we had not looked at over the last seven years whilst Val [Shawcross CBE AM, Deputy Chair] and I have been leading the Transport Committee and we felt it was time we did look at it. Thank you for the huge contributions we have had from industry, alongside the survey work we did with over 1,000 passengers, plus some focus groups with drivers.

I would just like to say the Mayor, in answer to a recent question from me, did comment about the report and that it was the Transport Committee's "excellent work", that "a lot of it looks very sensible" and that "there are many things in this report that look like common sense". I am really hoping that today we can clarify with Sir Peter Transport for London's (TfL) response. More than just some of the words today, I really want - and I know Committee Members really want - to hear very specific actions that TfL is going to take in response to our recommendations and how we can move forward to ensure that our taxis remain the gold standard in the world, as well as the support to private hire industry.

If I can kick off, Peter, welcome. We are delighted to have you before us today. The first hour or so is going to be on taxi services and private hire and then we are going to move into a range of other areas, picking up some of our recent work.

One of our key recommendations was around the issue of a need for an overarching Mayor-level strategy. We felt that this was the one thing that was missing. Every other mode of transport has a very clear strategy and vision of where TfL and the Mayor want to see these developed. Have you discussed the findings of our report in detail with the Mayor of London? How are you going to develop - or are you going to develop - an overarching strategy? Not only the drivers and the wider industry; even the London Taxi Company has copied me in on a letter to you saying that they feel that this could really see the trade and manufacturers come together to shape policy moving forward in the future. Perhaps you would like to comment on that.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The first thing to say is the Committee has seen our response, which actually does, I hope, deal in a lot of detail seriously with the recommendations. That is the first thing.

The second thing to say is in respect to the long-term strategy. Clearly, there are various issues to say, actually, by the way, yes, I have discussed this with the Mayor. We discuss the taxi and private hire industries regularly and our response has been seen and cleared through his office.

There are a number of things to say. Firstly, the basis of all of the strategy is the Mayor's Transport Strategy and that is quite clear. We replicate some words in the recommendations about what it says about the world-renowned reputation of London's taxi services and accessibility and manoeuvrability and so on. That is the basis of it. There are a lot of subsidiary policies and the new development is an initiative to see whether we can come together with the taxi and private hire trades to have a more strategic discussion about what needs to be done.

The only caveat I would say to that, as I would with much of the rest of this stuff, is that our role in this respect is not only as a transport authority but actually particularly as a regulator. The job of a regulator is to apply, hopefully impartially, the law and the regulations provided by Parliament for these two trades. Actually, that is not as easy as it looks because there is a great deal of public interest in how those things are applied. In the rest of what we do, we are an authority seeking to achieve a balance between modes and it is particularly, as you know in the Committee, a frightfully difficult balance, for example, about the use of road space.

In the particular case of these two industries, subsequent to the transferral of powers from the Commissioner of Police to TfL in 2000, it is a regulatory activity. Some of the things we are doing are applying the law. You can have a view about how that is applied. You can have a view about what should be done. We have a view about the law itself. The Law Commission has been looking nationally - at least in England and I think in Wales - about the future of taxi and private hire legislation. We have co-operated with that. We actually do not agree with it in all respects, but the law is quite difficult to enforce because some of it goes back nearly two centuries.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): In terms of this issue of the need for a strategy, it sounds to me like you are saying, "We are not sure really there is a need because we mention it in the Mayor's overall Transport Strategy and we have a few sub-strategies and that is probably as far as we are going to go".

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): No. There are some things we can do. Apart from anything else, some of the controversy about the taxi and private hire industry is because the Mayor's other strategies coincide with it. This Committee, and in fact the Assembly in general, have been pressing the Mayor extremely hard about emissions in London. It is clear that something needs to be done about it, for no other reason than the European Union (EU) has brought an infraction case and that is in process against the United Kingdom (UK) Government. There is an implication of that on the taxi and private hire trades which we have to work through and it is really important that there is some strategy, but it has to sit alongside some other strategies as well.

What can you do to help? We have this issue about road space, which is very pressing indeed. This Committee and the Assembly have been pressing us and the Mayor to deliver more for cycling. The board took a historic decision about the East West and North South Cycle Superhighways. That has an effect on road capacity in central London. The taxi trades have a very strong view about it. That is a balance. It sits alongside those other things.

Then there are some things we can do, which you point out, about taxi ranks, which make it easier for people to use taxis, and then there is the whole question about how these industries fit into the 21st century when everybody in the world has at least one of these [personal digital assistant/smartphone], if not two. We are trying to interpret how you should make that work in legislation of which the oldest part is 1832, which is before telephones were invented. Actually, it has a number of facets.

The suggestion is that there should be a new approach to engagement at a strategic level. We are beset when we do that by who should be in those meetings --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are going to come on to that a bit later.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): -- which is quite difficult because actually neither of these trades is coherent in terms of representation. There is some enthusiasm to do that and I am quite enthusiastic to do it because much of the discussion we do have is bogged down in absolute minutiae.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): You are enthusiastic and so you are committing that TfL will look to develop a strategy that will sit alongside all the other different modes of transport strategies and that will have a vision of where you want to see taxi and private hire in the future and what infrastructure and other support you need to do to support those industries?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes. It will be interesting to see how much agreement there is because these two trades are to a large extent in competition with each other. There are things on which they agree. There are things on which they fundamentally disagree.

It will also be interesting to see what that strategy should have in it. There is a burning desire for more personal mobility in this city. If you look at the figures for the drivers, for example, the taxi driver figures are roughly the same. Private hire vehicles (PHVs) have gone up enormously since licensing started in 2003/04. That all indicates to us a desire for personal mobility and one in which you get driven. How do we express that in terms of what we need to do? Some of it seems to me to be obvious. There may be some things that we have missed. It has to be in the context of all the other things that the Mayor wants to achieve as well.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Yes, of course. You are saying you will look to develop this strategy?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes. I have said that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): That is fantastic. I just wanted to be absolutely clear.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): That is what the response is.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Fantastic. It says, "We will feed into future strategy", not "a future strategy." That is great.

Can I just pick up the other issue? One of the things that we felt very strongly in our evidence was that in the structure of taxi and private hire within the wider surface transport directorate, the service had been downgraded. It had been put right down the bottom rather than having someone very senior solely leading on this area. Will you review the structure and look at where it is positioned within TfL?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): That is an interesting issue. I have been pressed here since 2008 to reduce the number of senior managers and directors in the organisation, and indeed we have done that. Peter Blake [Director of Service Operations, TfL], who is currently the director in charge of it,

is quite new but his responsibility is to cover a bit more than that. We have split, in some of these areas, policy from the carrying-out of the function. I am actually not unsympathetic to looking again to it, but it is in the context that if everybody had a director for everything, then some of you around the table would be saying to me, "What happened to that 15% or 20% reduction that you were mandated to do?" It is a management decision about how that is done.

There is another view which says taxis should be dealt with entirely separately from PHCs. I do not subscribe to that view. That is facile, actually, because much of the activity is much the same and the licensing activity in particular is an administrative activity that can be carried out in a very similar way.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): You will commit to have a review of the structure?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I will have a think about it. Of itself, it seems to me --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Think about it.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I will have a think about it. It is a management decision about how these things are done. The outcome of it, we can have a discussion here, but what I said to you is true, which is that if I had a director for every different function that this organisation delivers, I would revert to a structure in which I took people out in order to save money.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): You will have a look at this, not just a think about it?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes, I will have a look at it. It is roughly the same thing.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Great. Thank you. That is another commitment. Thank you very much. We will move on to looking at the relationship with trades and passengers. Val?

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes. Thank you very much, Caroline. Sir Peter, you were quoted in an article in *The Evening Standard* saying,

"People say to me, 'Your job is to protect the taxi trade.' No, it isn't. Our job is to look after the customers."

One of the things that we felt doing this scrutiny was that that is a false dichotomy. There does seem to be a very strong public view that people want both a healthy private hire and a healthy taxi trade and that there is not a dichotomy between protecting the industry and protecting the interests of customers. What is your view of that now? Do you think that was a throwaway line that in retrospect you wish you had not made?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Actually, I do not believe anything that is written in the newspapers, including quotes from myself, and it was part of a much longer sentence. What you have to remember is this: the reason for all this legislation is primarily the protection of the public. That is the reason for the licensing regime. The reason for preserving the rights of licensed taxi drivers to be hailed in the street uniquely is because they are the only people who (a) know where they are going and (b) are entrusted with the right of carrying people when you do not know who the driver is and they do not know who you are. That is the purpose of all that legislation.

The purpose of the PHC legislation is to allow a similar activity to take place, but there has to be some knowledge about who the drivers are and who the customers are because they do not pass the tests that licensed taxis do. Primarily, if you look at our job as a regulator, it is really important to note that the entire huge panoply of these regulations is designed for public protection. That is the basis on which the regulation ought to take place and the basis of our decisions in regulation ought to be the extent to which public safety is enhanced or diminished by the individual actions of drivers, operators or vehicle manufacturers.

Also, the taxi trade deserves a good future and deserves a healthy future and the private hire trade is self-evidently demonstrating that there is a good future by its massive expansion. Indeed, those people who say that the taxi industry is in decline are missing the fact that it has the same number of drivers and we still see people applying for The Knowledge in as many numbers as we have seen before.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): I do not disagree that TfL's principal responsibility here is regulation and doing it properly within those regulations, but I felt that what was missing - and Caroline has made this point - was a broader desire as the transport authority for London to actively manage the whole industry, both sides of it, into the future because there is huge challenge facing the industry. To go to the question, there seems to be a suggestion that really the senior management of TfL, perhaps because of structural issues, is just out of touch with the needs of both the trade and the passengers. Our colleagues here do feel that quite strongly and we have heard it from right across the board.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I am sure they do. The answer to that is, firstly, you have to go back to the regulatory activity, which it is absolutely crucial to carry out properly.

Secondly, there is no doubt - and it says it in the Transport Strategy and we are interested in it - that, as I said, personal mobility is a very important component of living in this city, particularly for people with disabilities, kids, luggage and everything else. Actually, your inference is unjustified because Leon [Daniels, Managing Director, Surface Transport, TfL] and I particularly are very interested in this. We spend most of our time currently dealing with a few specific issues that are very consuming; unduly consuming, I would say, bearing in mind our desire to sort out what we have to do. You do have to remember that it is done in the context of this regulatory responsibility.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): I do not doubt your personal interest and Leon's interest, but what was being put to you is that institutionally TfL is not coping and that you have a senior management gap on this whole issue. Can I just move on --

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): That I disagree with because --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Can I just move on to the issue of contact and whether or not TfL is actually geared up to listening and understanding what both sides of the industry are saying at the moment?

There is a Cabbies Cabinet. None of us have ever seen it. What do you think the Cabbies Cabinet has actually achieved since it was set up? Could you make it more transparent? We have never seen minutes. We are not allowed to observe the meetings. This is basically a public issue being discussed between the industry and TfL. I do not see any reason why it could not be more transparent.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The Cabbies Cabinet was set up by the Mayor as, if I recall, an election commitment and he chairs the meetings. I do not go to them. Leon [Daniels, Managing Director, Surface Transport, TfL] sometimes does; otherwise Garrett [Emmerson, Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, TfL] does. It is a meeting run by the Mayor and the trades go in and say what they

want. We have a lot of interaction with both trades. The private hire industry has asked for a meeting with the Mayor and just had it last week or the week before when I was on holiday. No doubt there will be more. Those trades have more access to the Mayor, for example, than the bus operators, who carry 6.5 million people a day and who have not ever met him, I think. Some of the railway operators have not ever met him. I do not think that is right. It demonstrates a real interest.

In addition, the Mayor appointed Bob Oddy from the London Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) and Steve Wright from - I cannot ever get the letters right - the Licensed Private Hire Car Association (LPHCA) or whatever it is called to the Board. I am assuming he did it in the knowledge that the Board is legally constituted and the individual members cannot in fact represent individual interests, but they do take part in the Surface Transport Panel, which is more informal, and are able to say things. I do not think there is any lack of contact at that level. If you want me to ask the Mayor --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): The problem with lack of transparency, Sir Peter, is that people cannot see either that the debate is being had or that there is progress or what the answers are on the issues, and it seems at this point that there is a relatively poor relationship in terms of the history of these things between the taxi trade and the private hire trade and TfL at the moment. We do not know whether the crucial body that was set up to promote communication and understanding and to try to work through problems is dysfunctional or not because we cannot see what is going on there. We cannot see what they are debating. Clearly, in terms of output, something has gone wrong because I would put it to you that the relationship has deteriorated between TfL and the taxi and private hire industries.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There are two answers to that, one of which is that if you want me to ask the Mayor whether or not he is agreeable to publishing the minutes of the Cabbies Cabinet, both now and previously, I will. That is his choice, not mine, but I will ask him.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): We would very much appreciate that because transparency is in everybody's interest, including his own.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The second thing is this. There are, I agree, an unprecedented number of things happening in a city of nearly 9 million people that have a profound effect on everybody who uses the road network and travels around it, including the taxi and private hire trades. At the root of some of what you are saying are some difficult subject issues for which the origins are different and for which the solutions are imperfect for everybody. I made a little list of them this morning as I was coming here. There is a huge issue about Uber and about the legality of --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We will come on to that, Peter.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There is a huge issue about the provision for cycling because the more dedicated provision for cycling you make, particularly in the centre of the city, the less movement there is. It is quite clear that the taxi trade feels strongly. The LTDA has threatened to judicially review the decision of the Board about the East West Cycle Superhighway. I do not know whether it is going to do that or not. My understanding of the Assembly's position is that it has been critical of us and the Mayor for not proceeding with those plans fast enough. It will be interesting to see where that goes.

There is a real issue, which I am very concerned about and which I am happy to talk to you about, about the effect of the proposed Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and the length of life of taxis, which is profound and on which I have some views if you would like to discuss it. We have had some trouble with driver licensing, on which I am happy to admit that we did not as well as we should have done, but now we have recovered it. There are some issues about touting and about the level of --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are going to be coming on to that as well. It is one of our hot topics.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Just to come back to this Cabbies Cabinet, Sir Peter, two things to say to you. There are always really difficult issues in trying to manage a city with so many challenges: shortage of road space, etc. We are not saying that everybody will always get what they want.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): They will not. No.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): However, people want a hearing. They want an opportunity to influence and shape it and they want it to be known that they are being listened to. At the moment it is not clear. What more could you do to include private hire drivers and operators in exchanges and discussions? They are also an important industry. We, as a Committee, are interested in the health and the future of both sides of this industry. How are we going to make sure that the private hire industry also gets a voice?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I agree with that, too. The first thing to say is that it does not seem possible at a senior strategic level to meet both industries at the same time and have a rational discussion because fundamentally they are, at least in part, in competition with each other.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): You can overlay that, Sir Peter, because passengers in London want both types of facilities for different types of journeys and occasions and that came out to us very strongly. People do not say, "We only want this", or, "We only want that". They do want that diversity of choice.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The passengers do, but the ability of the senior people in both parts of those two trades to actually be willing to discuss some of these more difficult issues together is limited. That is all I would say.

The other point which is undoubtedly true is that it is quite difficult to find a real representative body of people. For the Cabbies Cabinet, we established with some great difficulty some criteria for which groups of people you would deal with, bearing in mind that most membership organisations are very reluctant to tell you how many members they have. There are some groups included in the Cabbies Cabinet. There are other groups who would like to be, but who do not seem to be able to demonstrate any significant level of membership within the cab trade. On the private hire side, there are clearly some quite large companies who are not in the one large body. It is the GMB that represents to the extent that it does private hire drivers and they are included, but within the two trades they are quite fragmented, actually.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): I think we all understand that in terms of representation these tend to be fragmented industries and there is a message there for the drivers that more unified voices would be so much more helpful. Sir Peter, TfL ought to be striving a bit more officiously to create the framework for those good dialogues to take place.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): However, what I would say is that the multiplicity of representative bodies usually produces, with some rare exceptions, somebody who does not like whatever you are going to do. That is the problem with it. If you have this discussion with individual drivers, which I do, a lot of them will say, "Actually, I do not want to be represented by anybody. I am an individual on the streets. I have my licence and I can do what I want". That is completely reasonable, but it would help if you could get some consensus amongst the groups on both sides because it would enable us to look at some of these things more easily than we have been able to do so far.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): It is useful to hear you say these things, but I just would also say to you that we have tried to do the report we have done in the broadest possible public interest way, and I would hope that you would actually hear it from us when we tell you that there are these strong views that the industry feels disenfranchised by TfL.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I know there are.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): We need to move on, Sir Peter. Sorry.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I replicated some of the issues because I want you to know that I know that there are some strong views in this, but across even the issues that I mentioned there are some profoundly different views between the taxi and PHC industry and within both of those industries there are some different views again. That is the point.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): There is a way forward through some of these issues. Caroline, I am sorry to go on.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Transparency around some of these meetings would enable all drivers in the industry to see what is going on and being discussed. Victoria wanted to come in on this.

Victoria Borwick AM: Sir Peter, may I just take you back? Val [Shawcross CBE AM, Deputy Chair], my colleague here, was halfway through a conversation about the Cabbies Cabinet and whether it was possible to have more external representation on it or observers or any other work that we could do. In the spirit of co-operation, which I hope is what we are trying to get to today, could you just clarify what your answer to Val would be about having possibly a Member of the Assembly or somebody else attend?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is his meeting and so it is the Mayor's decision, but if you want me to convey that to the Mayor, then I will very happily do that.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): If you will, we will pick it up in our correspondence from this meeting, yes.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Rather than just convey it, Sir Peter, would you recommend it to him?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): You have not heard the answer yet. Yes. On reflection, I would, actually.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Thank you very much.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are getting lots of ticks today. This is very good. We are going to move on to public safety. Navin, you are going to pick that up?

Navin Shah AM: Yes, thank you, Chair. Peter, in recent months, regrettably, there have been high-profile incidents of cab-related sexual assaults. Can you tell us what steps are being taken to protect passengers in such incidents?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We have run over successive years the largest campaigns about safe travel, particularly at night, that anybody has ever run. If anybody wants to compare

what has been done in that regard in the years since the creation of the Mayor and the creation of TfL with what happened prior to 2000, they are extremely welcome because nobody did anything prior to 2000.

Part of that, whether everybody likes it or not, has been the licensing of the private hire trade, which was previously unlicensed and extremely prone. We go out of our way to make a huge presentation to particularly vulnerable people about not getting into unlicensed vehicles. Actually, the market research shows over the period we have been doing it that the number of people who understand that you should not get into an unlicensed vehicle has greatly increased and the number of people approached by touts has reduced by something like four fifths. Fortunately, that is not my view. That is confirmed by independent research. That is asking the customers.

Navin Shah AM: Peter, I appreciate steps have been taken but, as you heard from the response from the public gallery, obviously there are still concerns. From our Committee's investigation, what was clear, for example, was that appropriate signage was an important factor in assuring the public that they have made safe choices as related to both industries. Can you tell us whether you are taking on board, for example, improved signage, which can go some way towards improving the situation and which needs to be done very, very quickly?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There is a response in the response to the Committee's report that we produced which says we are supportive in principle of the private hire trade's proposal on vehicle signage. What it does not say is that was the proposal for the display of the letter 'P' on number plates or alternatively something surrounding the number plate. What it does not say is that we have had a go at that. We had a go at that some years ago and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and the Department for Transport (DfT) were adamantly opposed to it and indeed we could not get anywhere with it, which is why we wound up with firstly the yellow sticker in the front and rear windscreens and then subsequently the 'pre-booked only' sticker, which allows people into bus lanes for the purposes of dropping off or picking up.

We are going to have another go because we would like it as much as the private hire trade would to be very clear about those vehicles that are licensed in that respect. It seems to me to be absurd that you can have the stars of the EU on your registration plate but you cannot put on the registration plate something that is fixed and with the registration number of the vehicle that says, "This is a private hire vehicle (PHV)". We are going to have another go and, if that does not work, then they have suggested that we do something around the number plate because recognition is an issue.

The only other thing that you have to remember is there is an end of that market which is not particularly keen on recognition, which is the executive black chauffeur car end. We have to be a bit careful about not doing anything mandatory that affects them because they are part of the market and they are part of the people who are regulated and you have to look after everybody together. I agree with you but --

(Interruption from the public gallery)

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Hold on. As I said at the beginning, this is a meeting in public, not a public meeting. Please, I know people feel very strongly about this, but let us hear Sir Peter's comments.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I agree with you that it would be extremely helpful for these vehicles to be as clearly identified as possible in a way that enables that identification to be removed if they are no longer being used for that purpose.

Navin Shah AM: I am pleased to hear that you are going to have another go at improving the signage and to open up discussions with DVLA and whoever is necessary, but can you please let us know and keep us informed of what progress you are making on that, which is very essential? This is a significant step towards public safety.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes, I agree. Yes, I will.

Navin Shah AM: Another aspect: Garrett Emmerson, when he attended the Committee, with regards to public safety said that this is as much about public awareness and education as it is about enforcement. This aspect about public education is something that, again, I would like TfL to see what best you can do. Also, if I can raise this issue, how does TfL intend to improve licensing and safety information for passengers in that respect?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There is an answer in the answer to the recommendations that you made, which is about doing more and better in terms of safe travel at night. That has proved to be an extremely effective campaign, and I will just say again for the avoidance of doubt that we measure that not through our own views but through asking people who might use both licensed and unlicensed vehicles. There is more we can do. You will see a piece in there about doing more with tourists and doing more with the airports at the points of entry. There is always more we can do, and it is quite true that it is about awareness as well as enforcement. We are getting the message over simply because to succeeding generations, particularly of young people, who are vulnerable when they are out at night, it is much clearer and indeed there is a better supply of vehicles they can get in that are legal.

Navin Shah AM: Peter, this is a burning issue both in terms of public awareness and therefore safety needs to be put on the agenda as a priority and something for which we cannot wait for a long time. Therefore, can we have your assurance that TfL will put this as a priority because public safety is obviously of prime concern to everyone?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes, we do and we are.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Can we move on to looking at enforcement now, which is, I know, an issue that we all feel very strongly about? Jenny, you are going to lead this for us.

Jenny Jones AM: Peter, there does seem to be some discrepancy in the numbers of people actually doing enforcement between the numbers we hear from TfL and numbers we hear from drivers. Could you just clarify exactly what the numbers are?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes, I can. There are 41 TfL compliance officers, rising to 48 by April. There are 68 dedicated police cab enforcement officers – seven City of London and 61 Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), which makes 68 – that are funded by us. I will just draw your attention to the fact that in 2000 that was one sergeant and six constables, for the purposes of comparison. There are another 400 officers from the Roads and Transport Policing Command (RTPC), the majority from the Safer Transport Teams, whom we call upon for cab enforcement operations and who are mobilised regularly. There are another 290 specially trained police officers across the MPS who are used in plain-clothes decoy operations. They are volunteers who are – how will I say this – of the type and gender of the people who might be unduly approached by touts. In addition, for some of the exercises, people from the local borough commands also do it.

If you add all those numbers together and divide them by the number of nights in a year, you are obviously not going to see all those people on the streets; nothing like it. You are going to see smaller numbers of people

and the deployment is by day of the week. The deployment is also by exercise. There are some big exercises going on that use a lot of those people. There is a guaranteed minimum strength of 38 combined-hour compliance officers and cops on the street every Friday and Saturday night and that is supplemented every weekend by people on specific operations.

Jenny Jones AM: I have been out on quite a few traffic and roads actions with the police and I know that they are very people-intensive.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes.

Jenny Jones AM: As you say, you are not going to see many people out with those numbers, but the problem is quite big.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes.

Jenny Jones AM: I am not very good with initials, either. Is the RTPC going to change things? Are you going to use more police officers who have more powers?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): You are right because one of the recommendations that the Law Commission has, which we are very supportive of, is to allow our compliance officers some more powers. They are not much use without a police officer because the police officer's powers are superior. The RTPC does give us the opportunity of more deployment because, as you know, the old traffic police were a bit of a law unto themselves.

Jenny Jones AM: I am very supportive of traffic police.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): So am I. If you listened carefully, I did not say I was not. I just said that they were a law unto themselves, which is a different observation.

Jenny Jones AM: Many of us are, yes.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It will give us the opportunity for some more. The other thing of course is that it is quite right to use officers from local borough commands. One of the things that we do because it is important is in the places where touting is rife we encourage the local Borough Commanders to see that as one of their priorities. They do not all see it as one of their priorities. It depends where you are in London and what you do. I am pleased to say in Westminster generally they do see it as a high priority, but you have to appeal to the MPS with its resource issues to get that priority addressed in a satisfactory way.

What they will do for us quite often is to roll these things into other exercises. For example, for those recent high-profile exercises in Soho, which were very successful, they rolled some enforcement into there as well, which meant that they had more cops doing it than otherwise would have been there. We are quite keen on doing that and part of the liaison activity with the MPS is to encourage them.

The one thing I am a bit bothered about is the suggestion that somehow licence fees ought to be devoted to more enforcement. This is a criminal issue and should be dealt with by the police as a criminal issue. I am not sure that taxi drivers should be paying part of their licence fees to pay for this. It should be done as part of normal policing because it is a public safety issue and we make those points very strongly. The creation of the RTPC is recognition that more durable use of those resources can be done here and we just have to continue banging on to do it.

Jenny Jones AM: The people you have talked about have all sorts of other roles. It is not only the taxi and private hire. They look at the safety of vehicles and so on. I am sorry if I missed it; can you tell me how many people are actually dedicated taxi and private hire?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There are 41 of our compliance officers, rising to 48 in April.

Jenny Jones AM: They only do the taxi and private hire?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): They only do compliance for taxi and private hire and there are 68 dedicated police cab enforcement officers who only do taxi and private hire, but there are another 400 from the RTPC who do those activities regularly.

Jenny Jones AM: From time to time, but not always. I am talking about dedicated.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Add 41 and 68, and they are dedicated. The 400 do other things but can be mobilised to do this and are.

Jenny Jones AM: The anti-touting operations I have been out on have taken eight people. You mentioned somebody playing the part of a victim and so on.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes.

Jenny Jones AM: They take a lot of people.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): They do.

Jenny Jones AM: You cannot possibly, with those numbers, cover much of London. It just strikes me.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes.

Jenny Jones AM: It concerns me that public safety is at threat.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes.

Jenny Jones AM: There just are not enough people from TfL and from the police out there. On the Police and Crime Committee we will start looking at the RTPC because obviously --

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): My point, Jenny, is simply that this is not just a RTPC issue. This is a public safety issue. You know better than I do - because I am doing transport, I am not the Commissioner of the Police - that the police have to balance their resources, which are hard-pressed, against many objectives. The point that I make when I meet Borough Commanders and when I meet Helen King [Assistant Commissioner for Territorial Policing, MPS], for example, is that this is a really important activity and failing to do enough of it can contribute to people being injured or, sadly, killed in some cases. It is not true. Actually, there is a limit to how many dedicated resources you can see. What you do want is the Borough Commanders. There is an issue about this in some outer London town centres. Romford, Croydon and Kingston are all really busy at weekends. There is undoubtedly some of this going on. I want the Borough Commanders there to deal with this seriously. They should be deploying appropriately resources in the protection of young people, students and other people out for a good time because this is a really important issue. We are getting that message through, but if the Committee or the Assembly also want to press the MPS

through the policing activity to do more of this, actually, frankly, you are really very welcome and I support it, too.

Jenny Jones AM: My point is you have talked about this being a core policing activity and you are now, as TfL, paying the MPS to get involved. I would have thought you have a lot more budgetary pressure than we have.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I have, but I do not have it with the Borough Commanders. That is the point. You are almost answering your own question because the RTPC is also dealing with traffic policing, which has been attenuated to the point where it has really been invisible, apart from fatal accidents. We are trying to grab some of that back as well. This is one of a number of priorities. What I am saying is that a good Borough Commander with a vibrant late-night economy in their places has as much to want to do here as anybody in the RTPC.

Increasingly, the MPS is coming around to this view that actually this is a good thing to do because, as ever, it is not just particular offences. People who do these sorts of things are more likely to commit other offences as well. If you get people who are doing completely unlicensed touting – they do not have any insurance to start with, their car ought to be confiscated – they are probably doing other things illegally. They might have drugs or weapons. We are getting that message across. All I am saying is that this should and does go beyond traffic and transport policing.

Jenny Jones AM: We will take this up, I am sure, through the Police and Crime Committee. Can I just ask you finally about pedicabs and enforcement on pedicabs?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes.

Jenny Jones AM: I have always been a big fan of pedicabs until I got in one and was ripped off. I am slightly less keen on them now.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): You really do not accept advice, do you?

Jenny Jones AM: How much enforcement do you do on those?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Sadly, they are not capable of being dealt with through the licensing regime because of a case in the courts which defined them as a category of vehicle of which there is no legislative trace. They are pedal-cycles. With a pedal-cycle, you do not have to have a licence and you do not have to have insurance. Incidentally, the Government has some proposals that will make it even more difficult for electric pedicabs to be dealt with because currently, if you fit a motor, they do become a motorised vehicle and they should have a licence and they do not.

How do we deal with it? Actually, we have no powers at all. I wish I did, but I do not. The Government has not given any powers. We encourage the MPS and this then has to be dealt with by a combination of the RTPC and the boroughs. We encourage the MPS to deal with them on a different basis, which is about obstruction, about public order and about the other offences that the drivers might be committing. They do exercises on that from time to time and they are reasonably successful, actually, but it is quite difficult because nobody has given us the powers to deal with this.

We said to the Law Commission very strongly, “We want the powers to be able to license those things”, because that would give you the power to ban them. If people are listening, it would give you the power to ban them. We do not have that power at the moment and we would very much like it because they do create

an obstruction. In the vernacular, they are a bloody nuisance in central London. The point is this: we do not have that power currently now. The next thing to say is that the Law Commission's report was fantastically contentious. The Law Commission had more responses to its proposals to reform taxi and private hire legislation than any other piece of work it has ever done. It took it far longer to do. The draft bill that it has produced, we do not agree with all of it, though we clearly do agree with this. The chances of it getting into national legislation I would give as 50-50, frankly, and we will have to see what a new Government does.

However, in order to get around the fact that people keep saying, "You have done nothing about it", and it is quite difficult, as you have heard, to do something about it, I have asked our General Counsel to draft a Private Member's Bill about pedicabs, which we are at the point of finishing. There are some familiar faces in the Assembly and on the eighth floor of this building who might shortly become Members of Parliament and when they do I will present them with a draft Private Member's Bill for pedicabs and we will see whether any of them would like to take it through the House of Commons. Until they do, the only way of enforcing is to get the police and the borough commands to do something about the obstruction of the street, about bad behaviour and about the offences that the individual drivers might be committing.

Jenny Jones AM: The Mayor himself can put a bill through Parliament. I suggest you ask him. He can do it.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The Mayor. Just be careful. A Private Bill. We have a Private Bill in Parliament. It has been there four-and-a-half years. It has eight clauses, it has cost about £500,000 and we still have not got it through. I am drafting a Private Member's Bill that any Member of the House of Commons could present if they get the opportunity, which very simply has in it the powers to give us the powers to deal with these things properly.

Jenny Jones AM: I understand that, but the Mayor himself can put legislation through Parliament, and if you got him to do it now, then obviously later he might be in an even more powerful position to help it through.

Can I just go back, though, to the action on pedicabs? The MPS at the moment are doing something called Operation Safeway, which is when they go out in rush hours and stop cyclists and they stop motorists and so on. Have you asked them to do an Operation Safeway for pedicabs?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): No. They deal with it differently. In fact, in the places where we are doing Safeway, you will not get pedicabs. The junctions that they are using for Safeway are junctions with a high traffic of ordinary cyclists and motor vehicles in general. If you want to deal with pedicabs, you want to be on the streets of the West End, Soho and a few other places after about 6.00pm, 7.00pm or 8.00pm at night and it is not the same thing.

Jenny Jones AM: No. The point is that focusing resources in a short period of time, even just one evening a week or something, could make a big difference.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): They do that in the West End. The trouble is that you get rid of one lot and another lot turns up. In fact, there is a warehouse in Southwark full of confiscated pedicabs, but they are so cheap that you just get more. They are doing those exercises. Again, if you want to press them through the police activities of the Assembly, you are very welcome. They get in the way of everything in the West End. They are not a joke. Somebody will one day get killed. When they do, they are all going to say, "What did you do about it?" I will have to give them the same lecture I have just given you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Can I just pick up a couple of things you are saying? You are saying it is up to Borough Commanders almost to prioritise this issue. I know from meetings I have had with Borough

Commanders that this is absolutely not at the top of their lists and having been out in Westminster late in evening, with some drivers, looking at the issue of touting and going up to some police who were patrolling, they were not even really aware of the legislation and what they were able to do. Particularly in places like the West End and other town centres you have mentioned, Romford and Croydon and so on, it is really important that the officers who are out know the legislation and are able to take action.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is, yes. I agree with you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): I do not think they all fully do.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I would agree with you. Actually, it is a source of constant pressure that is applied from many sources because the police have a multiple of responsibilities. Of course, there is another inherent contradiction, which is that in some of these areas they are only too pleased to get rid of people out of the public domain, regardless of how they go, and that is really unfortunate. We work really quite hard and I know there is a lot of work within the police. One of the reasons that we are keen to get borough people into these exercises is so that they become used to the legislation that they can deal with. The trouble is even the legislation is quite complex. If you have been out on one of these things, in order to prove that they are touting you have to go through a rigmarole of doing it, which is a bit painful, actually. You do really want to have to do that, but that is the way that currently the law is constructed.

I agree with you. It would be extremely helpful if more Borough Commanders, particularly in those places, understood the nature of the law and what it meant.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Jenny and I both are on the Police and Crime Committee. We will pick that up.

I also just wanted to pick up the issue of your 41 TfL compliance officers and 68 dedicated police cab enforcement officers. That compares to New York, which has 189 officers who are dedicated to do similar work. It really does feel that we need a lot more people in that team, particularly when the TfL officers, basically, without a police presence are not much use and are unable to enforce.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): What that needs is more police officers. The only thing I would say to you is that the number of 400 was drawn from the Safer Transport Teams and the RTPC and you cannot do all this work with the same people. They become quite well known, actually. You have to rotate people around. You cannot be mysteriously the same middle-aged bloke in the black hat and the coat at Camden Town on a Friday.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): I think they would recognise you, Peter!

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Sadly, they do, actually. That is why they do not really want me to go out on those things because I do appear to be quite noticeable and they tell me to keep my mouth shut because my voice people remember, even if they cannot remember what I look like.

Those numbers are not directly comparable for that reason. It is quite hard to describe to you how often those 400 people and the 290 are used. The only assurance you can have about police operations is that they – especially the 290, of whom I would say a large proportion of them are young women for the obvious reason that that is a section of the late-night market, which is likely – are very convincingly not police officers and they do need to be rotated. I do not accept that you can compare one number with the other because I do not think, if we doubled the number of 68 to 132, it would have half the effect as it does drawing numbers from the 400 and the 290. You want fresh faces and you want it to look like something that never happened

before. It is entrapment, more or less, though that is not the phrase that you have to use, otherwise it will be misquoted.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Usual, yes. We really would like you to review the numbers working in that team. It was something we felt very strongly about.

I want to move on now to our last area in terms of this part of the meeting, looking at Uber.

Victoria Borwick AM: Yes, the elephant in the room that we have not really talked about today. First of all, just a quick quote from Boris [Johnson, Mayor of London]:

"We've got to sort this out because what you've got is the Uber people using what I think is effectively a meter because you are reading it from the fare and the distance. If it is a meter, then that company is in breach of the Act."

Then he goes on to say,

"But the trouble is the initial advice that TfL got was that it wasn't [the case] ... It doesn't matter if the calculation is done in outer space, as far as I'm concerned. If it's there in the dial [this is Boris speaking, so that is why it may not be quite clear], if the actual meter is there in the cab, then that's a meter."

Anyway, that sets the scene. Really, we want to know an update because I - and I know many others - feel very strongly that this is not actually what we want for London.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Let me tell you the story, then. Uber applied for a PHV operator's licence in 2012. We have no legal ability to refuse any applicant a licence unless they are a mass murderer or have such serious offences or such a serious history that they are immediately debarred. They were granted a licence.

It became apparent that they were conducting their business through a modified iPhone and we contemplated the way in which they were doing this. It is, as everybody listening will know, a criminal offence under the legislation for PHVs to have a taximeter in a vehicle that is not a licensed taxi. This is one of the consequences of the 21st century and personal digital assistants (PDAs) and so on. We went to an eminent Queen's Counsel (QC) and said, having enquired how it worked from Uber, "This is how it works. This is what they are doing. Within the legislation of the Private Hire Vehicles Act, does this constitute a meter or not?" He concluded that it did not. It is not that we concluded that it did not; a QC concluded that it did not. We said, "If that is your conclusion, then their operation is legal". An eminent QC is not just an ordinary person, certainly not someone who deals with taxi and private hire legislation, which is old and somewhat antiquated.

The taxi trade object to this, which is self-evident, and we said to the LTDA, "We are a regulatory authority. We have done our job in taking a legal view about what the law allows and does not allow and the view we have is that it does. If you disagree with us, which you do, then the quickest route to go is to go to the High Court and ask the High Court to decide what the law says".

The LTDA, as the biggest of the taxi trade representatives, then issued private prosecutions against certain Uber drivers. They got to the Magistrates' Court. The Magistrate declined to deal with them because he discovered that we had offered to go to the High Court with the LTDA and other bodies and those prosecutions, therefore, languished. You cannot go to the High Court if there are criminal prosecutions pending because the High Court will not deal with it whilst there is a criminal case in train. After a lot of discussion, including some dispute about when this started and how long it has taken, we have just heard from

the LTDA that they have withdrawn their criminal prosecutions, which we welcome, and we will now go to the High Court to seek a declaration about what the law actually says.

As a regulator, I am content with any view of that law that is binding because the other way around, clearly, you have somebody who believes that what they are doing is legal and would challenge it if we decided that it was not. It is really important because the trouble is that none of this legislation was written in the era of mobile phones, of 3G technology and of transmitting information around the world.

The other interesting thing is that they do not seem to be on their own. Let me tell you this story because it is interesting. I asked for a Hailo cab the other evening, three weeks ago, and they are licensed taxi drivers and so that is OK. It said on my iPhone, "No Hailo cabs available, but we can send you a PHV". I thought, "That is interesting. Let us see what happens, then". I said, "Yes, OK, that will be all right". It said it would be at the same price as a taxi and so I thought, "OK. All right. I will get into this". I did get in. The guy turned up in a car and I got into it and he obviously asked me where I was going and I said the Royal Lancaster London. I was waiting for him to say what the fare was, but he did not say it and so I did not ask him. I went to the Royal Lancaster thinking, "How is this going to work, then?" He has an iPhone. Obviously, at the end of the journey, you have to say, "What is the fare?" He pressed the button on the iPhone; it says £14. I paid him £14.

I am only telling you that story now as we have written to Hailo to say, "On the basis of other activities in the private hire trade, can you please tell us how the fare for my journey was calculated?" It has either come out of the ether or it is self-evidently connected to time or distance. I am not telling you that for any other reason than the fact that we have to get all our heads around the fact that in the 21st century there is a load of modern technology that allows things to happen that are not in the legislation. The legislation imagined that a taximeter was a mechanical contrivance fixed to the vehicle, connected to the back axle and driven by distance and a clock. We are dealing with an environment where these things [PDA/smartphone] have huge computing power. I am quite anxious to find the result out because it is manifestly unsatisfactory that on the one hand you have something that people are using - there are a million Londoners signed up to Uber, believe it or not, because it is the sort of thing that young people use - and on the other you have people who are reliant, as much of the audience are, on a set legislation that never contemplated that you could have in your pocket something to calculate time and distance. If we can get to the High Court and if we can decide that, then actually, either their operation is legal or it is not. If it is not legal, they will have to change it because, if they cannot change it, we will revoke their licence. That is the position.

All I would say also is that it must have occurred to some of you just as it occurred to me that they do have an obvious second methodology, which is that if they do not send the price to the driver, they will send it to the customer. That will be an interesting series of prosecutions because, if you were to prosecute the customers for having a taximeter, it demonstrates how facile the whole legislation is. I am not suggesting that they are going to do that because that is their choice and not mine. What I am saying is that actually we are trying to make sense of legislation that never imagined that these things would be in people's pockets and would do the things that they do. If we can get to the High Court, which I really hope we can, we can get a legal ruling about what the law actually means in these circumstances and then we will apply the law in the way that we see fit.

The last thing I would say, Victoria, is that there are all sorts of allegations about, that range to and include bribery and corruption. I do not much like them either, actually. They are not very nice to me - some small elements of the taxi trade are not, either - but it is not our job to do things for people because they are nice or not. It is our job in this respect to interpret the law.

Look at what we have done with Addison Lee, who instructed their drivers at one stage to break the law. They instructed their drivers to go in bus lanes and break the law and we dealt with that very appropriately. In fact, we issued them with a licence that has a condition saying that they will not do it again because we will revoke them. We are quite serious about this stuff and we are serious about using our resources to pursue things which need to be done. The Addison Lee bus lane case - or Eventech as it is called - is just about to grind its way to the top of the European Court. It has cost us between £500,000 and £600,000. They appealed it when we thought they would not, but we pursued it and we are serious about dealing with breaches of legislation when they are apparent.

In respect to Uber and the modified iPhone, it remains a difficult issue simply because the law was never written with that in mind and somebody has to interpret it finally to allow us to do our job as a regulator.

Victoria Borwick AM: I would also just want to say to you that it is not just the meter. It is the regulation and who is actually driving these vehicles. The wonderful point about our taxi drivers is they have given at least two years, if not more, of their lives. They have invested in their future. They have invested in their vehicles.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Absolutely.

Victoria Borwick AM: We need to make sure that the extra value they give and the fact that they are all fully disabled-compliant is actually really important. As a city, we need to decide what we want and I would urge you --

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): That is right and the inalienable right of the licensed taxi driver to ply on the street with a light on is really important. One of the reasons that I do not think this is a threat, as some of the cab trade do, is because when I step out of the office, I do not think, "Will I get on an iPhone and summon a car?" I think, "I will stand there and wait for a cab to come with its light on". So long as the cab trade performs that function, frankly, it is actually very safe.

We are trying to do this in terms of legislation. The Private Hire Vehicle Act requires us to deal with vehicles, drivers and operators in the way laid down by the Act. If it becomes the case that London wants to see something different in either or both of these trades, some of that has to be dealt with in legislative terms and that is not to do with me. That is to do with what Parliament sets out.

Victoria Borwick AM: That is very helpful. Are there any other things that you want to talk about with regard to specific breaches of licensing regulations that are considered grounds for suspension or revocation of a driver or operator licence? Are there any other things?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I do not think so. There is a process to do it. There is a process of appeal, quite rightly. I do not think so.

Victoria Borwick AM: We just want to note that for the sake of the conversation.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): You will see our answers in the answers to the Committee's report.

Victoria Borwick AM: Then, looking back to what we were talking about earlier, obviously there are those who want to make sure that we do have a level playing field between all these regulations and regulators. We have GetTaxi, which is still using taxis, and Hailo, which seems somewhat to have gone over to the dark side. Of course, we have Uber, the face of Satan.

Anyway, for a more balanced view, you might like to give me what else you think you are going to do with any other regulation of this and other prospective ideas. I appreciate at the moment it is a moveable feast; I do accept that.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes.

Victoria Borwick AM: Obviously this is our opportunity to question you and if you have other things that you want to put in the public domain we would be very pleased to hear them.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The only other thing I would say is this, which is that the world of iPhones and BlackBerrys and apps and the electronic world has revolutionised many, many things. You can sit here and order a book from Amazon and it will be delivered this afternoon. You could not do that 15 years ago. We have a job as a regulator. We have a job, as has been discussed here, to make sure that these trades thrive and prosper, but the trades also have a job themselves to make sure they adapt in the modern world. I am not going to be able to stop millions of Londoners wanting to use their iPhones and BlackBerrys to do things you could not do ten or 15 years ago. It is not our job to develop a London-wide booking app for cabs and PHVs. That is the job of those industries themselves. There are people in the cab trades who do not want anything to do with any of this. They just want to drive their cab and pick up fares in the street. I know because I talk to them and actually that is entirely their right.

You also have to recognise that in this world all our kids use these things. They go out for a night with no money. They go with a bankcard and they go with an iPhone. You have a paragraph in the report about taking credit cards, which is a problem with the trade, partially because of the absurdly high margins the credit card companies charge individual drivers. Some of them do not have the required credit requirement. The trouble is that I cannot stop people getting in a cab and wanting to pay with a credit card. I cannot stop people walking around the city with an iPhone, thinking about what they can do with it. I cannot stop people coming out of a club at Shoreditch at 3.00am and saying, "It is Uber. I will take it if it is not surge pricing". One of the things that everybody in both of these trades has to think about is actually how modern life impinges.

I still think at the end of that that there will continue to be a thriving business for taxis on the streets with their lights on in London. I would not dream of - and nobody else I know would dream of - stepping out of an office over there and thinking, "I will get on the iPhone. I will see where Uber is". If there are people who do not believe that that is going to thrive, then part of their job is to find an alternative way of doing it, which is where Hailo comes from. It is where GetTaxi comes from. It is where this new Maxi thing comes from. Our job in that respect is to look at each of those developments and see to what extent it fits with the legislation. If it does fit with the legislation, it is OK, and if it does not, it is not legal.

Interestingly, Uber is not just Uber. Uber is a whole series of things including a proposition for unlicensed drivers to take people in their vehicles and pay and that is illegal. If they do that here, it is illegal and we will have to revoke their licence because you cannot, as we have proved with Addison Lee, be both legal and illegal at the same time. So far, they have not done that. I will be very relieved, as we all will, when we can get to the High Court and find out what the answer is and we will abide by that answer. Whether the parties concerned will want to take it elsewhere, I do not know - the legislative process is tortuous and fairly slow - but we will have to have an answer to it. All I can say is it is probably easier to do that than it would be to re-draft the legislation to contemplate what you can do on an iPhone. I can guarantee that if you did, within a year it would be out of date and that is our problem and that is why I referred to regulation in the first place. It is not what I like to do. It is what the law requires us to do and the interpretation of the law and actually licensing people to be safe on the streets of this city.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Thank you. The key thing is you want it to be a level playing field and that is what we stressed in our report.

Tom Copley AM: TfL has taken a comparatively soft approach to Uber. I know these are different regulatory frameworks, but they have been banned in Paris, Madrid, Brussels, Berlin and many other places. You mentioned that you had taken the legal advice, but of course you can go to two different lawyers asking the same question and get two different answers. It is hardly unheard of. Why have you taken this particularly soft approach --

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We have not taken a soft approach. We did not go to just any lawyer. I completely agree with you. The whole structure of the British legal profession is based on the fact that you can find any lawyer to suggest any prosecution will be successful under any circumstances. Do not worry because my brother has made quite a lot of money out of it in his career; I would not gainsay that!

We did not go to just any QC (Queen's Counsel). We went to the most eminent QC who deals with taxi and private-hire affairs, as you would expect us to, to get that view. We have not been soft on them. We have taken that view and then we have in fact said, "If that is the view, you can interpret this in different ways to the LTDA. Let us go together and find out what the High Court says".

The only other way in which we could be accused of taking a view is that it was suggested to us that Uber employed a large number of unlicensed drivers and so we did the largest record inspection we had ever done with Uber. We found one driver and he was charged with two offences in the Magistrates' Court. Rather strangely, the Magistrate decided not to deal with one of them and he was convicted of the other. We have dealt with them by putting a warning on their licences, which is what you would expect us to do in a relatively large operation with one transgression out of a very large check.

Tom Copley AM: Will you share the legal advice that you had from this QC and which QC was it?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Do you know what? If we can, I will. I cannot remember the guy's name.

Tom Copley AM: Fair enough.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): That is fair enough.

Tom Copley AM: If you are able to share the advice and the name of the person who gave it, that would be helpful.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): It would be appreciated.

Tom Copley AM: Would you seek a change in the law to bring it into the 21st century from the 19th century or whenever it was?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The interesting thing about that is that in fact the Law Commission report does seek to deal with it in some way, but what I said to Victoria [Borwick AM] at the end is pertinent. How would you redraft the law in order to deal with the progressive introduction of mobile devices which are cleverer and cleverer? How would you deal with it? What would you say to Londoners who are accustomed to using these things for doing everything including online shopping? How would you deal with it? The High Court may --

Tom Copley AM: As a regulator, you could be granted quite broad scope to be able to set requirements, surely.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Interestingly, the law is so voluminous. That is why we asked for an opinion. The Private Hire Vehicles Act is quite specific. It is a criminal offence to have a taximeter in a vehicle that is not a licensed taxi. The question is: what is a taximeter?

Tom Copley AM: TfL surely could be granted the power to decide what a taximeter is in legislation.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It was quite obvious that it was going to be contentious and so we sought expert advice about what we should do. That is the point. That is what we should do because either way around we are dealing with people's livelihoods and businesses and either way around we would have been challenged and either way around we need a definition. However, we are not lawyers and as a regulator we are applying the law. That is the point.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): I want to just finally pick up the issue of ranks, which was a really big issue, and the need for them. I guess those in the audience today will not have seen it yet, but we had embargoed to the start of this meeting a detailed response from TfL that Sir Peter has been referring to today. It is two very thin documents. One is called a *Ranks Action Plan* and one is called a *Suburban Action Plan*. I presume these will be on your website?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): They are, yes.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): They will probably be on our website today so that people will be able to look at those and look in detail at the response.

In terms of ranks, my understanding is you are planning to put up to £600,000 in over the next few years to really invest in ranks across London. Is that correct?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes. In terms of ranks, we are putting some money aside to deal with them. Since 2009 we and the boroughs have actually appointed 178 ranks, giving us a total of 1,254 spaces.

The real difficulty in appointing more ranks is the competition for kerb or road space and most of them are on borough roads, quite clearly. They are not on our roads because our roads are largely arterial roads. The boroughs in particular are sometimes quite unwilling to devote space to taxi ranks and we are saying, "Let us redouble that effort". I am also saying that I am willing to raise it with the boroughs themselves at a senior level. In fact, some of you can help with it, too, because there are some longstanding requests for ranks right across London where the boroughs are just unwilling to devote the road space.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Peter, my recollection from the evidence we had was there was a huge backlog of requests from the boroughs - outside certain hospitals, at Twickenham Stadium, at a huge range of places where you would think there would obviously be a taxi rank and there just is not - and the boroughs wanted them and TfL was not prepared to do what was needed.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The statistic I quoted, which is having established 178 ranks in 2009, belies the fact that we have not done anything. What the number of £600,000 says is that we are not going to let resource get in the way of it. I am quite happy to have this worked

through. I am happy to come back in six months or a year and tell you what we have done. However, it will require some other people to move because those ranks are, by and large, not on our roads.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): If you have the funding - and we know that there were 77 open rank location requests, some including multiple sites across London, and so you have this huge backlog - will you commit to looking to clear that backlog and working with the boroughs to ensure we have adequate rank provision across the capital?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I will not be able to clear it unless the boroughs are willing to actually make the space on the roads.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Will you work with them? Most of these were requests, as I recall, from boroughs.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Let us come back in six months or so and see where we get to.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We would welcome that. Lovely. Thank you. Thank you very much for your answers on that this morning. We have had a very thorough hour-and-a-half of discussion.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Are you not going to deal with the ULEZ and age limits?

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Not today. We did not cover that in our report because the Environment Committee is going to be dealing with that in detail. We are not today, Peter, going to pick that up.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): That is a shame because there are a lot of people --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Did you want to say something specifically on the ULEZ whilst we have drivers here?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I do, actually. Where we are is that the Mayor has consulted over proposals to limit the age of taxis in pursuit of cleaner emissions in London. All I want to say is that whilst we discussed with the Mayor what the results of the consultation are - and there are some very strong views - there is a widespread misapprehension about it. My view and our view is that the only way we can reduce the age limit of 15 years to 12 or 10 is to find ways of compensating taxi drivers for the loss of value in their vehicles that they were otherwise expecting to see 15 years out of. I do not think there is any other solution apart from compensation simply because we will drive people bankrupt and that would be extraordinarily unfair to them.

I would also say that in terms of Euro 6 taxis and zero-emission-capable taxis, my view prior to announcing the results of the consultation is that they should have a 15-year life in order to demonstrate to people that if you buy a new one you are not going to be progressively constrained.

There are two other things, one of which is that the manufacturers will have to demonstrate that the combination of the purchase and running costs of those vehicles is broadly similar to what it is now. People have to understand what it is going to do to the economics of their operations as taxi drivers.

The other thing is that the manufacturers are going to have to offer some sort of long-term warranty because if you buy a conventional taxi now you have a broad view about how long the engine and gearbox might last and what it would cost you to replace them. A hybrid vehicle stuffed with a lot of modern technology is going to be a rather different proposition. As far as buses go, we have quite a lot of leverage with the manufacturers and we just tell them to take some of them back and fix them if they are no good, but as individual drivers you are not going to be able to do that. We are saying to the manufacturers that the only way in which taxi drivers are going to buy these vehicles is if they offer a long-term warranty over those parts of them which are unfamiliar. I think they will do that actually and there is a prospect of there being more competition in the taxi market as a consequence for those vehicles than there currently is.

I wanted to say something in public about it because there are all sorts of rumours and speculation going around. In my view, you cannot take down the age from 15 to 12 or 10 without offering some compensation because it would just bankrupt people and that would be monstrously unfair. That is what is in our mind in those proposals.

How do we get the money? Where do we get the money from? We and the Mayor are pressing the Government because it has £500 million for low-emission vehicles. It seems totally unwilling to actually spend it, but it has it. Susan Kramer [Minister of State for Transport] has been helpful in that respect. It is not quite clear where the decisions are being taken. However, that is my view about reducing the age limit.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Potentially, there might need to be some subsidy for new vehicles as well. If they are going to involve new technology and it is going to cost a lot more, you may need to look at that as well alongside.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes, absolutely, although you have to remember that in the medium term the fare calculation for taxis is based on the running costs of the vehicle. My expectation is that these vehicles will be more expensive to buy and cheaper to run --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Cheaper to run, absolutely.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): -- and so we will have to see how that works out.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Thank you very much for that update. I would like to thank all of our visitors today for their excellent behaviour and for listening to all of the answers from Peter.

We are going to move on to other subjects now. I am sure most of you want to go. We should apologise to Londoners who wanted a taxi this morning because I am sure many of you will have had an issue simply hailing one.

(Adjournment)

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Let us start the second half of the Transport Committee today looking at other transport issues. We are going to start with something dear to many of our hearts at the moment and we have the scars from it: the London Bridge redevelopment.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Sir Peter, this is not a crisis of your making and please do not think because we want a conversation with you about London Bridge that we think that. However, I am conscious that basically transport in south London is in a state of crisis at the moment and much of the backwash of the redevelopment of London Bridge and the mismanagement of the services that go into London

Bridge is affecting TfL. This morning was yet another day in hell for many south Londoners. You cannot see this, but I was at Balham trying to get in alternatively through the Tube and it was completely --

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There was a broken-down train at Norwood Junction and a signal failure at London Bridge.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes. Crystal Palace was utterly chocker, a huge station. TfL's services are definitely taking the backwash. You and I have had a letter exchange, but do you want to say a little bit to the Committee about what TfL is trying to do to pick up the failures of the rail industry and make life a bit easier for the suffering passengers in south London?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Before I do, I will just say one thing about the previous part of the session, which is that I hope you enjoy assuming the mantle of some of those people because many of them --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Do not say this, Peter. Do not, Peter. Do not dig a hole.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There are many, many really good taxi drivers. That is all I was going to say. There are some who are not.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We had very good behaviour from the taxi drivers today and it has been a very good discussion and it was very productive.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes, we have.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Let us leave that there and pick up the impact of London Bridge on your services.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I just wanted to say one other thing, which is that as a public official I think it is absolutely reasonable to answer all of those questions in enormous detail whether or not people like the answers.

However, it is entirely unacceptable - and I am so inured to it that I am not bothered - that I have people who have been abused violently and accused of being fraudulent and of taking bribes. That is entirely unacceptable. I am not suggesting you do it; I am not suggesting that it is any more than a handful. All I am remarking on - and I want it on the record - is that that is unacceptable behaviour because we ought to be able to discuss those things without being accused of illegal activity and being soundly abused. That is it.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are on to London Bridge and the impact on TfL's services.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): London Bridge. We have had an exchange about it. I suppose the first thing to say is that the London Bridge project is huge and it was always going to be the case in the various stages of doing the project that there were going to be great constraints on the station and train services and that we would have to play our part in dealing with those.

We have played our part in several ways. We have played our part by leading the travel demand management exercise about changing people's journeys. Network Rail and the train operating companies have given us some money but without our leadership and without Vernon's [Everitt, Managing Director of Customer Experience, TfL] leadership we would not have got as much done as we could. We are continuing to do that. We played our part because it was apparent that people had changed their journey patterns and for a time we

were paying special attention to the running of the Jubilee line between London Bridge, Waterloo, Southwark, Bermondsey and indeed Canada Water. We played our part for a bit running some extra buses until it was proved that they were not needed.

We are also playing our part because there is quite a lot of diversion onto the East London Line and we have built up the number of five-car trains as quickly as we can. They are now all five-car on the East London, which has created 25% extra capacity on the East London Line. The only thing I would say about that is that some of the regulation of the Southern services is preventing us from achieving the reliability that we should do on the East London Line, which is a real shame. We only just last week got back to 97% on a couple of days, which is the worst we want to be on the East London Line. On other days, it has been much worse than that because of problems further out on the route to London Bridge.

Having said all of that, clearly there is no aspect of the recent iteration of the phase of that project that has been successful. After Christmas, the station was too crowded. When the train service changed, it transpired through a combination of the unreliability of new equipment, frequent failures and some inadequacies in installation. More fundamentally, it looks like there was an inability of the infrastructure that has been installed on the Southern side to operate the train service that has been scheduled, with the result that several trains have been cancelled. We are doing everything that we can to mitigate that in respect of running decent East London Line services.

However, at the heart of it are two things, both of which the Committee will be very familiar with. One of them is that there is no London focus for either the Southeastern or the Southern train services and they are run as part of a bigger group of services from a long way away. I bet there are now some people outside London who were vociferous objectors to us taking over the London part of the Southeastern and who now rather wish we had. We welcomed what the Chancellor said last Friday with Boris [Johnson] when he said that if the Government is re-elected it is going to look in the next session at devolving more of the rail services in London to the Mayor because that would be one solution.

The infrastructure difficulties are not finished yet. It is very worrying that it might be the case that the planned train service does not look as if it is capable of being run on the infrastructure that is being provided.

I do not celebrate anybody else's failure because we want Network Rail to succeed as well, but the other thing that it demonstrates absolutely in spades is that the problem with the national railway network is that there is not any leadership. If that had been my train service, even if it was not my railway, we would have been down there at London Bridge. We would have been down there every morning and every evening and you know we would have been down there, visible and at least saying sorry if not trying to do something about what it meant. The truth of it is that there does not appear to be a controlling mind. The national railway appears to be run by endless committees. I am in receipt of the daily performance statistics morning and evening for both the Southern and the Southeastern at London Bridge and I read them every day and they are not good reading. If you can get the managing directors of the train companies in here and the Chief Executive of Network Rail, I would be interested to know whether they are in receipt of the detail that I get because that is the only way you run a decent railway. I am not criticising them because they might be and I know there are a lot of people working as hard as they can to fix it, but it is a terrible thing for passengers in south and southeast London.

The other thing I would say, which I am quite happy to say here because I have said it to a number of senior people in the railway industry, is that if those had been my passengers, I would have given them two or three days' free travel by now because they have had a really rough time.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Yes.

Victoria Borwick AM: Well said.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Sir Peter, we did have them in. We had Network Rail in and in hindsight we were not hard enough on them because they were trying, clearly, to fix it but my observation is that since then we have seen the crisis with Thames Water in the tunnel at Blackfriars. Institutional fragmentation comes across as a key issue because Network Rail and the rail operators blame each other --

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): They do.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): -- and Network Rail and Thames Water were blaming each other. There seemed to be a lack of impetus around getting together to resolve problems. The ownership of the problem has been an issue. We accept what you say: that TfL does try very hard just to tackle issues.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is a wider issue, though, because it seems to me that the great lesson of the public-private partnership (PPP) era here is that actually, if it is fragmented, it is very hard for somebody to say, "Yes, this is all mine, I am going to do something about it and I care about the passengers".

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, that is exactly the point.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Actually, the great advantage of the structure we have now - and what we do even in respect of London Overground - is to say, "This is our problem. We are going to fix it". We do not come here and moan about Network Rail's performance with the London Overground, much as sometimes I would like to. We go away and fix it because we think it is our issue to fix.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): As a personal view - and the Committee has not consented to me saying this - I think that this is the moment when the institutional failure of that setup becomes most abjectly clear. It is when there is crisis that is not dealt with. Southern Railway in particular and Network Rail have let the public down.

Victoria Borwick AM: Very well said.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): For what you have tried to do, Sir Peter, we have to say thank you because you have tried as a body to pick up some of the slack from a crisis that is not of your making.

There is an awful lot of overcrowding going on at some of your hubs at the moment: Victoria, Canada Water and many of the smaller stations. Is there anything more you can do to try to manage that problem?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): At Canada Water in particular, we are really working hard. That is why I referred to running all five-car trains on the East London Line because that in itself takes people away better than it used to. We are working really hard to make sure the Jubilee line works every morning. If we had thought it was worth keeping on the supplementary bus service we would have done, but as a matter of fact it did not really seem to be doing much more than costing quite a lot of money.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): That is the only thing I did want to pick up with you, Sir Peter. You did provide a supplementary bus service running non-stop in peak times between Waterloo, London Bridge and Canada Water for a week during the disruption. Then it was lightly used and there was no appreciable benefit and you withdrew it.

I just wonder, Sir Peter, whether or not the problem there was that people felt the disruption would go away, that there was not enough time for people to get used to the fact that this service was there and that it was not publicised enough. Actually, more people might now be willing to make medium-term changes to their travel plans if they knew there was this alternative way into the area and it might be worth experimenting again with a pick-up service like that.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We did run it for a few more days. It was not just lightly used. There was nobody on them at all because the Jubilee line has not missed a beat in several weeks.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): It is the interchange that is the problem.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Partially, it has been relieved a bit at Canada Water because of the five-car trains on the East London Line. What I would say is that if it became apparent that we were really not coping again, we would have another look at it.

The other problem, as you know, is that it is quite slow in the morning peak coming up from Canada Water to Waterloo and London Bridge. People would rather wait outside. Even if you do shut for a few minutes, they would rather wait outside and get the Jubilee line than drag up on a bus. We are still running more 47s anyway and more 381s, I think. I would need to check.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes, you are.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I am not sure. People settle down into it. The real agony for me is that if you look at the daily statistics, nearly every train coming into the Southeastern side in the morning peak is late and on some days every train leaving on the Southern side in the evening peak at 5.00pm is late. That is pretty bad, really.

What it is also pointing to in the medium term is that the way in which the national railway service works in London is not the way in which 21st century London works. We had a bit of that discussion about the taxi and private-hire industries today. If you look at the national railway network, this concept of timed trains for a city of 9 million people who want to go everywhere all the time is outdated. It is not a metro service. It is nothing like it and they do not have the methodology of operation for a metro service. If you go down and stand at London Bridge in the evening peak and watch the trains going in and out of the station and compare that with Morden on the Northern line or Elephant and Castle on the Bakerloo line. At Elephant and Castle on the Bakerloo line in the peak hours, the train comes in, the driver gets off at one end, another driver gets on at the other end and it goes. At Waterloo Station, for example, on the South Western, the average dwell time of a train is 17 minutes. Quite often, the train comes in - it still has a guard, incidentally, although they do not do much - the guard and the driver get off, two different fresh people get on and it goes. We cannot live with that anymore. London is a busy place. That is part of what the Overground is all about. That has transformed a service that you needed a timetable for into one that you can rely on as being frequent and useful.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Could I just pick up something you said earlier on when you were talking about the infrastructure that is being put in at London Bridge? Are you effectively saying it is not fit for purpose?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): My understanding is that some of the installation was not done properly and had to be corrected. They put in some equipment they had never put anywhere before and found it would not work very well. I believe it is getting better, but I must say that if I was Mark Carne [Chief Executive, Network Rail] I would be pretty bothered. Signal failure at London Bridge,

when I do my morning texts every morning, seems to come up with monotonous regularity. Did you ever have Phil Hufton [former Chief Operating Officer, London Underground] here? I think you did.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Yes.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): He has gone to Network Rail. Phil ought to be all over it because new equipment ought to work. You should not put it in unless it does work. When you have put it in, it should work. There are still too many failures there.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): When we asked them in the private briefing, we were told basically that the control room staff manage the trains coming in and out and that it has taken longer for them to get used to the new timetable and it has all run too tightly. They have specifically ruled out there being any problem with the building works or with the equipment and that was very clear. However, what you are telling us now, Sir Peter, suggests that they were not being entirely honest with us about what is going on down there.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I do not know when you saw them, but my understanding is that there is some signalling or track circuit equipment, which was brand new and of a new design. It was put in and did not work very well and they have had to find some people who can fix it and there are not many of them. Some of the infrastructure that was put in was not working very well to start with and is getting better. However, I would be bothered. You know yourselves. This is not me saying, "Ya boo sucks. Aren't we good?" We have had our own problems with this stuff.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Yes, the Jubilee line.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Modern railway signalling is fantastically complicated and really difficult and so I would forgive them some of that stuff. You put stuff in, you test it, it still fails and you have to find a way of doing it. However, more fundamentally, what would really worry me at the moment is the inability to run the service in total that is expected to be run on that infrastructure because it appears to be a real worry, actually. You will have some unfamiliarity. In today's railway, you cannot expect drivers to be intimately familiar on day one with some changed arrangements that they have never seen before.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): It was supposed to settle down by now.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): If this is settling down, it is not very good, is it? That is my observation from reading it on a daily basis.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): It is appalling. It is absolutely appalling.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): When - because I am sure we will - we get our hands on these London suburban services, we would want to take the Overground approach to them.

The other thing that people might have to get used to is that you cannot have trains to everywhere. The Underground works with people changing from one frequent service to another frequent service. Part of the problem with these services is this massive multiplicity of destinations. If you look at Thameslink - and this is a criticism of the way it has been franchised that I am very happy to put in the public area - when the whole thing is finished, that train service is going to run from King's Lynn to Eastbourne and from Peterborough to all sorts of south coast destinations. I would not like to run that at a very high frequency through central London. That is an implausible suggestion. Actually, Crossrail is going to be quite complex. It has three ends, two of

which are on the national railway network, but it does not have 17 ends and if it did I would not give any chance to it running reliably through central London.

My strong feeling is that Thameslink will have to go on as it does because the contract has been let, but I bet the next one is Bedford to Gatwick Airport. I bet it does not go to Eastbourne and Brighton and King's Lynn and the Wind in the Willows because it is just implausible to get all that lot to work properly in central London.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): Good interchanges?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes, absolutely. That is the point. There will be people who do not like that because I am sure it is very comfortable to get the train you want from Purley to London Bridge or Victoria but --

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): It does not happen now and so we may as well have something different.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): That is the point and of course people are paying for it than they do for our services.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): All right. Sorry, Chair.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We have quite a lot to get through. Steve, you wanted to pick up something on this?

Steve O'Connell AM: Before I move on to the next topic, which is night buses, I wanted to support Val's comments and to thank you for your comments also, Peter. The effect on many of my constituents in south London has been horrendous over the last few weeks.

My point of criticism was around modelling and whoever ran the modelling of this beforehand. If you were in charge or if someone else was in charge, there would be some hard words to be said because that let down passengers. Would you not agree, Peter, perhaps with that on the modelling aspect? They were supposed to model this as best they could beforehand.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There are some limitations in modelling. I would not either claim we are perfect at it. With some of the traffic schemes you look at, you think you have it right and you have not.

Steve O'Connell AM: Yes, I get that.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is all a bit public, is it not? That is the problem. It is not like you are trying it out. That bothers me, too. One of the things we have done, for example, as you have seen with these enhanced train services with new signalling, is to go gently in the upgrade until we get there. This appeared to be planned to work in total on day one and we are now at about day 60 and it still does not work properly.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Deputy Chair): They had no plan B, either.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is the wrong way around. I do sympathise with them. There are an awful lot of people, I suspect, down there. I know I get minutes of endless meetings with loads of people in them and I see minutes with them desperately trying to fix all of this.

I am not as brave as people think, but I would have gone down there. You just know. I do not have to go down there every day to know people are having a bad time. Any day on this sheet when there is no train leaving London Bridge on time in the 5.00pm to 6.00pm hour, you know people are really going to be pissed off about it. Why would you not turn up and say, "Do you know what? I am in charge here. Let us do what we can. Let us have some free coffee. Let us do something useful"?

Dave Ward [Route Managing Director (London and South East), Network Rail], to give him credit, was on the television in the first week of January as one of the Network Rail people. Dave looked harassed and I am sure he was because he works very hard, but nobody has been there since, have they?

Steve O'Connell AM: You are absolutely right. They came to us and we spoke with them but we did not, as Val [Shawcross CBE AM, Deputy Chair] said, give them the hard time that perhaps we should.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We all thought it was about to get better.

Steve O'Connell AM: Yes, but that is a fair point. If I can move on to my --

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): . It is Onkar next on ticket offices.

Steve O'Connell AM: I am sorry. I missed that. I am so enthused about night buses.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Next, ticket office closures.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Sir Peter, these ticket office closures started in early February. How have you been monitoring the impact of those closures?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The first thing to say is that we have shut a few of them. In those stations, there has not actually been a staff reduction yet. We still have people helping and seeing how it goes. We will not take those people out for a bit because we want to make sure we have it right.

We will monitor it and we will come back to you with what people have said. We will do a bit of market research. Indeed, if the market research starts to show that we have missed something - and I have been asked already to make it particularly relevant to disabled people, which we will - then we will change it. We will come back in due course - I do not know; in three or four months, maybe - and say, "We have done all of these stations so far. This is what we have found out. This is what we need".

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: I was led to understand that people were being redirected from stations which had closed to the train stations that you had opened nearby. People were being redirected to them and I wondered what sorts of problems those might be.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): No, they are being helped to do what they want to do in the stations that they have gone to, which they would have done in a ticket office, but with the machines.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: They have not been redirected?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): No.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): No, sorry. We have had staff go down to observe and they are being sent to ticket offices nearby. We have actually witnessed it. We have had undercover City Hall staff out there.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Where was that?

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Embankment.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): OK. I will take that away.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): I am sorry, Onkar. I just wanted to chip that in.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Thank you, Chair, for that clarification and for knowing what the source of information was. What is to be done there, Sir Peter, to find out what is going on?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We will find out about it. I did not know about that. I do not know about everything, clearly.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: I understand. If you would get back to the Chair, it would be very helpful.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The object of making those changes is not so that people have to be inconvenienced to do something somewhere else. It is so that they can do what they need to do in the place that they have gone to. Most people do not need any interaction these days. That is undoubtedly true. The people who do need interaction should be able either to do it at the machine or to do it on your own and you should not need to go somewhere else. I will find out if people are being redirected why that is and I will come back and tell you. How about that?

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: The other thing is that some stations are being nominated as 'gateway' stations and they are going to have enhanced visitor information centres. What sort of services will be provided in these enhanced visitor information centres?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The first one will be up and running at St Pancras quite shortly. What we want to do is to take the interaction with visitors away from speaking through a glass screen and actually sit down and ask about what they need as a visitor to London and do a wider range of things than just travel ticketing. We will have to find out how it works because it is not something that we have necessarily done. We have done a bit of it in the past but it has been done in offices and we want to make it less formal.

The other thing that I have said to at least some of you is that we are not totally definitive about where those things are, either. There clearly are a few stations that have a lot of visitors and many stations have virtually none at all.

If you come to London regularly either on business or on pleasure, what we know is that a vast number of those people already know where they are going, they already have an Oyster card and they will just go about their business. If you are fresh here for your first time, you probably want to sit down with somebody and actually have a discussion about which product is best for you. That is the sort of thing, "By the way, if you want to know where some places are, we can tell you". We do not need a glass screen between our member of staff and the visitor to do that. We can just do it.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Do you imagine situations, though, where you have ticket offices closed and new ticket offices open and there is overcrowding in the stations? People will be going to those stations where there are ticket offices open and so you will have to deal with the extra footfall.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Part of the difficulty with the ticket offices as they are at the moment is that quite a lot of people queue up to speak to somebody about something that the machine will actually do for them. The object of having more people in the ticket hall is to help people. You will see. We regularly comb the queues at places like St Pancras because people are queuing up to speak to somebody when the machine is more likely to speak their language – the machine speaks 17 languages – and can quite often do absolutely the transaction that they want. Sometimes they are just a bit unsure what it is.

The best thing you can probably do as a visitor to London with an uncertain itinerary is to buy a basic Oyster card with a bit of pay-as-you-go on it, see how it goes and then trade the rest in when you go or, hopefully, keep it and come back to this wonderful place. That is the sort of reassurance people want. They do not actually need a detailed interaction with a ticket-seller. That is what we are trying to do. The presence of the members of staff in the ticket hall is in order to talk to people about what they can do in order to sort them out rather than have them queue up at a ticket window.

We are going to do more of it. It is going to be a process of experimentation to find how many staff we need at various times to do that, but all I can say to you is that that is a better interaction with the customers and users than it would be if you had to speak through a bit of glass to somebody on the other side of it.

Dr Onkar Sahota AM: Great. Thank you.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are now moving on to look at night buses.

Steve O'Connell AM: Night buses, Peter, are a very popular form of transport. Usage has gone up 170% over a period of time. They are very popular with Londoners. They deem them safe. They deem that they often take them close to their front doors.

This is in the context of introducing the 24-hour Tube service, which again is to be welcomed. There was a recent study that you will know about that has suggested that the delivery of the Tube service may result in the closure of perhaps a third of the night bus routes. TfL disputes the analysis and I am sure you will have a comment around that. The fact of the matter is that I very much welcome the 24-hour Tube service but there is an issue here about the potential for the cutting of bus services.

The first question to you, Peter, is whether you recognise that as an issue. Do you recognise that there are going to be night bus routes cut as a result of the introduction of the Tube service?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There is some deliberate misinformation about this. What goes on at the moment is that the night bus network, which as you say has been very successful, is enhanced on a number of routes on Friday and Saturday nights by additional buses because of the additional volumes of people on Friday and Saturday nights. If you look at the N29, which is the most frequent night bus service in London, I might be a little bit wrong but on broad grounds it is about every six or seven minutes from Sunday to Thursday and about every four or five on Friday and Saturday because there are more people who use it.

You would expect and we would expect that the result of the night Tube on the lines where it is going to run would be a reduction in people on the trunk bus services coming out of central London parallel to those routes. Indeed, the proposals that we have, which are shortly to go out for consultation – we are just finalising

and deciding whether we put them out this side of the election moratorium or the other side - will be to take off the extra services on Friday and Saturday nights.

What I can tell you is that the consequence of reusing those resources will be a significant number of extra new night routes on Friday and Saturday nights in suburban London to take people away from the places they will be able to get to on the Tube and to take them nearer home. There might be one or two bigger changes to night routes if the whole route entirely parallels one of these services, but you have to remember it is only two nights a week. We are looking to take the opportunity in respect of the new night services in the suburbs to see which of them we could run all seven nights even though the Tube is only running on two of them. The night bus map on Saturday mornings and Sunday mornings will look different from the night bus map from Monday mornings to Friday mornings and that is because there will be a Tube service.

I am not currently anticipating any significant numbers of examples where the night services on Friday and Saturday nights will be at less frequency than they currently are on Sunday to Thursday nights. Does that make sense?

Steve O'Connell AM: I clearly understand that and we will get on to talk about increasing services to suburban areas and outer London areas in a minute. There would be a logical course, from your analysis, that if it ran along the core route there would be duplication and you would address that.

Also, there is a nuance to it, which of course is around accessibility for disabled passengers because clearly the buses are fully accessible and not all the Underground stations are such. How would you respond to that sort of analysis?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): What I would say is that my rule of thumb is that if what we are doing is to reduce the extra frequency on Saturday and Sunday mornings to the frequency that applies on the other five nights of the week, it is pretty tolerable. That seems to me to be not unreasonable.

In terms of accessibility, to the extent to which we run more than a dozen new routes on Saturday and Sunday mornings in the suburbs, which will by and large be from hubs like Morden and Wimbledon¹ or wherever it goes - and I will just make sure I have the lines that are running at night right - then that will be an addition to accessibility.

Steve O'Connell AM: Again, they are popular from a passenger safety point of view because the night buses will tend to take people closer to their homes at an unfathomable time on a Saturday or Sunday morning.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): By the way, although it was not raised earlier, we are also looking to make sure where we can that there are adequate taxi ranks at the suburban stations so that if you want to get a cab home from Morden, you can.

Steve O'Connell AM: I had a mayoral question around that because, talking in terms of outer London, clearly, those areas are not benefiting necessarily directly from the 24-hour Tube, which is fine, although many of them will. Of course, what we need to do is to make sure those good people get home. When they get off at Brixton or Morden or wherever, you need to put those extra services on.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The draft of the consultation document that I have seen - at the risk of telling you something that somebody will change at the last minute - has, from memory, at least 15 brand new night services on Friday and Saturday nights in the suburbs and one or two that will run every night of the week, which will be an improvement to suburban London.

¹Following the meeting, Sir Peter Hendy clarified that Wimbledon was mentioned in this context in error.

Steve O’Connell AM: No details within the consultation --

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The resources from those will come out of the extras that we currently run on Friday and Saturday nights on the trunk routes that we do not need to do anymore.

Steve O’Connell AM: I get that. We will look at that closely.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It will be out either just this side of the election moratorium period or just afterwards --

Steve O’Connell AM: We look forward to that, Peter.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): -- because the changes are for September or whenever it is. Is it September? Sometime in --

Steve O’Connell AM: September.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): September, yes.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Yes. Whenever it is.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We are going to move on to cycling now. I just want to pick up an issue that we have been concerned about. We have been promised since December full details of funding TfL is committing to each borough for Mini-Hollands, Quietways and other cycling programmes, but this has yet to be released by TfL. When can we expect to get this detail? We would like to fully scrutinise it and we are going to have Andrew Gilligan [Mayor’s Cycling Commissioner] back for our next meeting.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I will find out. I cannot see why you cannot have it imminently because certainly you know we have committed the mini-Holland funding itself.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): All the boroughs have been promised some aspects of their mini-Hollands and there are all sorts of words going around. We want to actually see in detail what has been promised and what is going to be delivered.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Let me take it away, Caroline. I do not know where that is.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We do need it more than just a couple of days before our next meeting. We need to look at that in detail.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): OK.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Thank you. One of things when you came before us last year that we flagged with you was the underspend on cycling and you said at the time, “What this underspend represents is frankly an embarrassment”.

In answer to a recent question I have had, you still spent only £29 million on this year’s cycling budget and you are looking at a huge underspend potentially again. Why is this and why are you not able to get the money

out of the door to be spent on these cycling projects that London wants and that the boroughs desperately want to progress?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I have a feeling that that number is a part-year number and not a full-year number.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Obviously, we are still in the year, yes.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We still are in the year. I am less embarrassed than I was last year because there is a lot more sign of visible progress.

However, what is quite clear - and you will know it from the considerable controversy derived from the Cycle Superhighway proposals - is that these things are not easy to design and when you do design them you get a lot of consultation responses about things that people would like you to do with them. Indeed, we are still not out of the woods because some of the representatives from the large audience that you had earlier seem at least from their words to be pretty determined to judicially review the East West Cycle Superhighway. If there is a judicial review, it will probably take several months and then we will have all that lot delayed again. Therefore, there is a difficulty in getting them designed and there is a difficulty in addressing meaningfully the results of the consultation.

Then at last you get to delivery. There is some delivery because if you go down the Whitechapel Road you can see signs of Cycle Superhighways 2 and 5, which we have started to deliver and that money will get out of the door. However, you do have to be mindful of the fact that there really is a lot of controversy attending to these things and there are all sorts of people who either do not want them or do not want them in the particular form in which we have designed them. I think we are going the right way. If you have looked at the consultation, for example, about the Bow Roundabout, we now have another set of proposals that include pedestrian access. We are getting bolder about what we think we can do.

It is not without its critics. Most boroughs always find concern over some aspect or another. You will have seen with the East West Cycle Superhighway that The Royal Parks do not seem to be too keen in front of Buckingham Palace. It is also the time that it takes to fix that. They have not been too keen for some time and I would quite like them to sort themselves out, but it is quite hard to do. By all accounts - and you can tell me if I am wrong - the Transport Committee and the Assembly have been very supportive of doing these proposals. However, if you get 20,000 consultation responses, you are under a massive obligation to have read them all, even though it is alleged that we have not. If we have not read them and do not take them into account, we will be successfully judicially reviewed.

I am less apologetic than I was because there is clear evidence of progress. In fact, as you said, some of the road users in London have to accept sometimes decisions that are taken on behalf of one set of people that have an adverse effect on another.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Can I just pick up briefly a couple of points you made about the judicial review? How do you respond to the threat of a judicial review? You said a few months, I think. Is that how long you think it will delay the scheme?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is up to some of the people who have at least said they are considering it and we cannot know what they might claim. Broadly speaking, there are two ways you can do it, without giving people helpful advice against our own interests. One is that the process has not been carried out properly and the other is that in some way the design does not represent something which is in the reasonable range of things that we and the Mayor should do. I do not know which one it is.

Leon [Daniels, Managing Director of Surface Transport, TfL], Howard [Carter, General Counsel, TfL] and I and others have been very concerned to make sure that so far as we have been able to do so, we have followed the process of proper consultation properly. It has not been easy to do and not helped by large numbers of comments outwith the normal process from all sides, but we think we have done it.

The other question is whether what we have designed is a reasonable response to the Mayor's policies on road use in London. We think in respect of the most controversial one, the East West Cycle Superhighway, we are not 'pleased with ourselves' because that is the wrong expression, but I am very grateful to have some very talented people who have managed to produce substantial mitigation of the traffic-worsening that would otherwise have taken place and I do not believe there is much more we can do to affect it. However, it is clear that some journey times will lengthen and there will be some reduction in reliability and there are people for whom those things make a big difference.

Some of them are very vocal about it. It is interesting. You have never seen the freight and logistics industries here because they have these concerns but they are rather more measured about how they express them than continuing to threaten judicial reviews and legal action. We have rewarded them to the extent to which we are able with meaningful discussions about what we can do to make their lives easier. We are in fact doing that even with people who do threaten judicial reviews because we are reasonable people.

One of the reasons that I deprecate some of that is that you have to in the end think, "Actually, the Mayor was elected on a manifesto and he has made his manifesto quite clear". You have been beating me up for years about not delivering it fast enough. Then we get to a decent proposition, we get 20,000 responses, we have a pretty difficult time getting it through the Board and then somebody says at the end, "We will just a judicial review. We will just slow it down". OK, we will carry on with that, too, and we will get to the other end. If it is found that we have done something wrong, which it could be because we are not perfect, then we will correct that as well. It is a long old process and it really is not easy to do. If it was, we would have done it earlier.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Briefly, I am very conscious of the time, but any thoughts on how you might get a compromise with The Royal Parks or an agreement?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): What is the best way of putting this? The Royal Parks ought to accept that the Mayor's determination to have segregated cycleways is as justifiable a reason to have changes around the memorial in front of Buckingham Palace as it is to have them on the Embankment, on Lower Thames Street, on Lancaster Gate and on roads in London used by a lot of people. That is what I think and I very much hope they will come to that conclusion.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Yes. Particularly as the Mayor appoints them, you would have thought that that would be helpful. Let us move on to pedestrian safety. Tom?

Tom Copley AM: Thank you, Chair. Could you tell us about progress on the improvements discussed in our *Feet First* report and your Pedestrian Safety Action Plan?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We are getting on with it and the material evidence that we are getting on it is, for example, the consultation for the further changes at Bow Roundabout and large-scale public realm schemes in various parts of London including the Elephant and Castle proposals, King's Cross, Archway and other places. You will need somebody other than me to go through them in enormous detail, but we have quite a lot of evidence out there that those things are going on.

For the avoidance of doubt, those things too are difficult to do because we are, again, trying to balance the interests of pedestrians against every other road user. However, we are getting on with it.

Tom Copley AM: For example, on the town centre pedestrian safety pilot programme, do you have any potential locations for that?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Not in front of me, but if we do I will write to you or I will write to Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM, Chair].

Tom Copley AM: Can you give us an update on work being undertaken with bus, taxi and private-hire trades to improve awareness of pedestrian safety?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): If you look in the response to the taxi and private hire report, you will see that one of the proposals right at the end is that we do something about the education of drivers in both of those trades.

Getting both an ordinary driving licence and a vocational driving licence has in the past been a one-off activity. If you had a licence, you had it for the rest of your life. In the heavy goods vehicle (HGV) and bus and coach industries, there is now a requirement for a Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC), which is a day's training every year over a five-year period. Indeed, if you want to get one of those licences or continue to hold one, you have to have done that. I still hold my passenger-carrying vehicle (PCV) licence and I have done those five days of training. We as TfL - and the Mayor, actually - are pretty keen on some of that training being relevant to urban circumstances, cycling and pedestrians.

There is a whole variety of courses you can do. I have done one on blue-light recognition. It is probably the most boring half-day I have ever spent in my life because I know what a police car looks like and I do not need to be shown one. I have also been out on the Safer Urban Driving course, which requires holders of vocational licences to go out on a bike and experience what it is like on the streets of London. That is a very sobering experience for a lot of those drivers of vehicles who have not ridden a bike since they were kids. Part of that includes an awareness of pedestrian safety.

You will see quite tentatively in our response to your report that we are thinking about what we could do in respect of taxi and private-hire vehicle drivers who also, frankly, if they have held a licence for 40 years, could do with some refreshing about what is going on in London's roads. I am not sure that will be greeted with enormous acclamation, as some of the other things we have talked about are not. It is probably a good thing to do. We will have a discussion with them --

Tom Copley AM: Will you require them to do that as TfL?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is arguable, actually, because we have given them a licence. What we probably could not do in the negative is to take it away if they would not do it. That is the problem. We are going right back to that stuff about regulation. We are putting into effect regulations determined in Parliament. It is very entertaining for people to keep blaming me about what I am doing, but we are putting into place a whole series of regulations determined at national and in some cases international level.

I am fighting like hell to make Safer Urban Driving and that CPC element mandatory for drivers of PCVs and HGVs in London. Currently, the DfT is saying to me that EU legislation prevents any particular course being regarded as mandatory, rather than having a qualification in general. I am saying nuts to that; this is a far

more important day training than all the other days training and we really want to do this. That is part of the issue with all these things.

I am really passionate about this. Every single one of these deaths of pedestrians and cyclists and anybody else on the road really hurts me because I can just imagine the grief and sadness that haunts both the families of the people who are injured and the drivers involved and all that sort of stuff. However, there are some real hurdles to dealing with this. I am absolutely passionate about it but I --

Tom Copley AM: Just to be clear, you can recommend that taxi drivers do this sort of training but you cannot compel them?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): I would. Now none of them are here, but I bet you there would be the most enormous backlash to it because there will be people who think, "I am licensed. I have a driver's licence. What else do I need? I am all right". We have to persuade people. I expect there will be some associations that will say, "Another TfL thing. They must be bonkers. Let us just get on with our jobs". We will have to work at it.

However, on some of the things that we have responded to in our response to your report, we are asking for your help because this is actually a persuasive job. The streets of this city and the way that people live in it are not the same as they were 40 years ago and we all have to recognise that and behave differently because of it. A bit of training would not be a bad thing. We might try a way of incentivising it as well, actually.

Tom Copley AM: Thank you. Just finally, you said you would develop a gold standard for pedestrian crossings. How are you working with stakeholders to develop that?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Certainly we have been rolling out the countdown stuff, which appears to be widely acclaimed. I will have to get somebody else to come and talk to you in detail, if you want me to, about it.

Tom Copley AM: OK. Thank you.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): You will just have to accept my limitation, like how I cannot remember that QC's name. It is in here somewhere.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): It is fine. Do not worry.

Tom Copley AM: We are running out time anyway and we have one more section.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): There is a physical limitation to what I can remember at the age of 61.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): Do not worry. It is always impressive what you can. Door-to-door services.

Andrew Boff AM: Could you tell me whether or not TfL is reconsidering the proposal to close Capital Call and if there are any measures to alleviate this closure or whether or not you plan any alleviation strategies?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Andrew, two answers, one of which is that the Committee has written a report about it and we are thinking very much about what it says. These are not easy things to deal with. You have commented about Capital Call in your response.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): We have.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We are thinking about how we respond to it. We are quite sensitive to it because actually Capital Call was originally established because of the shortage of Taxicard provision in certain boroughs and I certainly would not want to take away Capital Call without it being clear that there was a reasonable alternative.

Andrew Boff AM: What is that alternative?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We will come back to you on the report in detail. It does seem as though there is a wider ability of provisioning in Taxicard now than there was, but we would want to be pretty certain that you could cover it. Otherwise, we would take away a service for which there is not necessarily any immediate replacement and that would be a shame.

Andrew Boff AM: There have been some aspirations in the past to integrate all the mobility services and door-to-door services. Why have those efforts failed in the past to integrate them?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is more difficult than it looks. That is the answer. Every provider and every set of users is very keen indeed to keep what they have. They do not want to be rationalised in terms of what they have.

The suggestion has been made time and time again about rolling National Health Service (NHS) non-urgent transport provision into this and all I can say is that it is really difficult to do. The NHS is not a coherent organisation in total and it is not easy to prise out of it bits that would bolt on. Quite a lot of people are prepared to give you the responsibility for doing what they are doing but do not want to give you the money that goes with it. Without that, it will not work. It is not just our inability to deal with that; actually London Councils has had a couple of goes at this and has not succeeded, either. We have to be realistic about what we can achieve.

Andrew Boff AM: Do you think that the consistency of such services might be assisted by the introduction of personal travel budgets, as is suggested in one of the recommendations from this Committee's report?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We will have a look at it. My memory from looking at this before is that part of the difficulty in this is that different boroughs have different entitlements and nobody in a borough that has a big entitlement wants it equalised with a lesser entitlement in a smaller borough. The moment you take a global view of it, you are at risk of some people being disadvantaged in comparison to what they are doing now. There is some attractiveness in doing that provided that also the services are there for people to be able to use, actually.

Andrew Boff AM: It assumes that the budget is going to be the same for every borough.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): It is not.

Andrew Boff AM: I am saying that if it were to be introduced, a personal travel budget would be the same in each borough. If it was a localised decision, it may very well vary from borough to borough.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Part of the success of the expansion of Travelcard is that the balance of funding has changed over the 15 years since TfL started from being wholly a borough responsibility to being a very large element of our money in total proportion. We are going to have a

serious look at your recommendations as we should and we will come back to you, but long experience has persuaded me that these things are not quite as simple to do as we might think.

Andrew Boff AM: Have you considered the possibility of reforming Dial-a-Ride so that it is commissioned locally by the boroughs rather than centrally?

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): We have looked and we are looking at various possibilities – not all of which, I suspect, are equally shared by the parties represented in the Assembly – about whether or not it should be dealt with on a London-wide or local basis. We even have to be careful about that. Dial-a-Ride seems to be welcomed in a lot of places as a pan-London facility when boroughs do not have much of their own.

Andrew Boff AM: If you only ever go for consensus, you will pretty much do nothing, sometimes.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): You had at least an hour's worth earlier in the day of places where we have not been able to go for consensus and people do have very strong views.

We are mindful. I do not want it to be forgotten. We are mindful of all of the current clients. Whenever you raise this subject with the people who use these services, they get terribly anxious not that they might get a better service but that somehow as a consequence of what we have done they will get something even worse than they have. We are mindful of that because it is not an easy place to be. The individual cost of some of these journeys is very large, but there is no doubt that the benefit that the people who use them get from them is immense. In some cases, it is the only way that they get out of the house.

Andrew Boff AM: They are the most vulnerable transport users.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): Absolutely. What has happened, Andrew, in the last 15 years is that there used to be a very large clientele for things like Dial-a-Ride and Taxicard, but because of the better accessibility of the bus service it has been boiled down very largely to people who simply cannot use the bus service. The moment you start talking about this, their fear is not that their mobility will increase through it but that their mobility will be reduced by it.

Andrew Boff AM: I suspect that people are more willing to change than you think because they do not see a perfect service at the moment.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): No, they do not.

Andrew Boff AM: I take the point that people do not want things changed at the risk of them getting worse, but some people are in a situation where a change most definitely would improve the service.

Sir Peter Hendy CBE (Commissioner of Transport, TfL): The other thing we can do for the avoidance of doubt, certainly as far as our own provision goes, is to seek to reduce the cost of it as far as we can either by improving the efficiency or by taking some of the cost factors out of it. We will have to come back to you.

Andrew Boff AM: I recognise that you have to respond to the report, which we are pretty soon going to be approving anyway, but thank you very much.

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Chair): That ends our questions. Thank you very much indeed, Sir Peter.